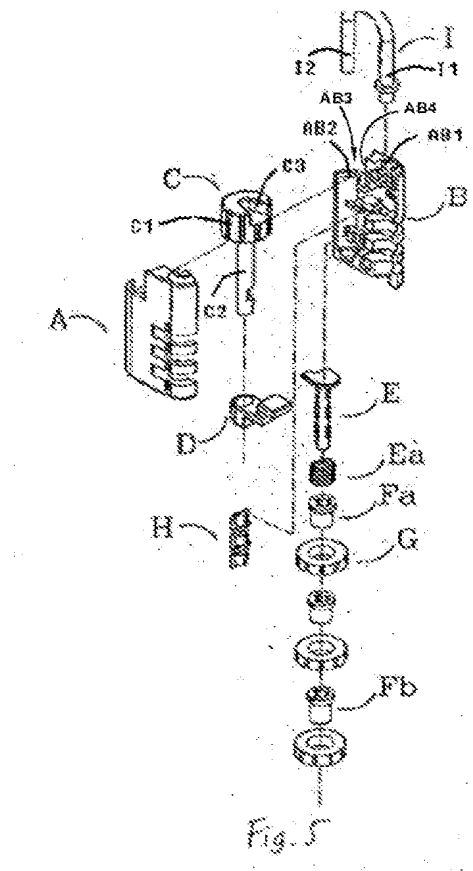


REMARKS

Reconsideration of the pending application is respectfully requested on the basis of the following particulars:

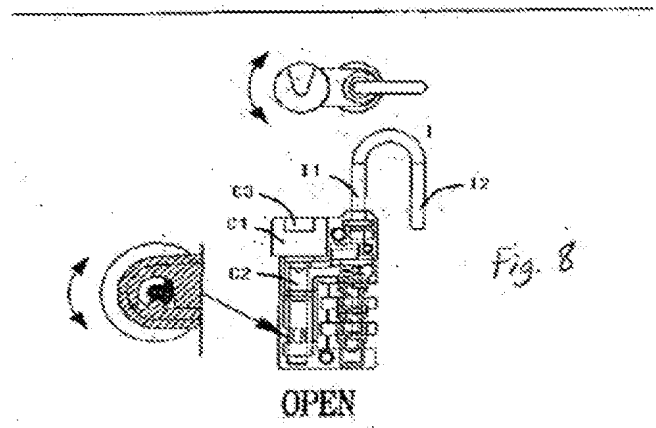
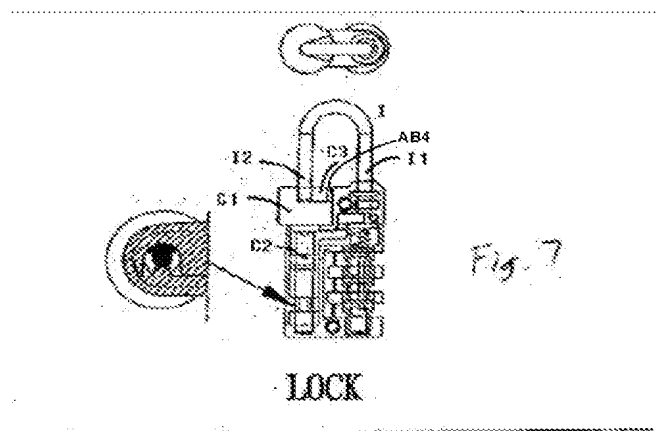
In the claims

Claim 38 is amended to more clearly set forth the present invention, and claims 40-41 are canceled. It is submitted that all of the features defined in amended claim 38 are fully supported not only by the present application but additionally by Applicant's provisional Application No. 60/443,331 filed on January 29, to which the present application claims priority, as explained in greater detail below, with reference to FIG. 5. from the '331 Provisional Application, reproduced below and annotated for clarity.



Referring to FIG. 5, support is found for the present invention generally directed to a padlock, comprising a housing (A, B), a shackle (I), a confining block (C) and a numeral wheel set. The housing (A, B) has a notch (AB3) in a corner thereof, a wall (AB4) facing the notch, a first hole (AB1) and a second hole (AB2). The first and second holes both are in communication with an inside of the housing and face in a same direction. The shackle (I) has a root section (I1) partly received in the housing via the first hole of the housing, and a free section (I2) extending from the root section and being disposed outside the housing.

Referring now to FIGS. 7 and 8 from the '331 Provisional Application, reproduced below and annotated for clarity, the free section (I2) of the shackle (I) is rotatable about the root section (I1) to a locked position (as shown in FIG. 7) and an unlocked position (as shown in FIG. 8).



Referring back to FIG. 5, the confining block (C) includes a block portion (C1) received in the notch (AB3) of the housing (A, B) and a stem portion (C2) received inside the housing (A, B) via the second hole (AB2). The stem portion (C2) extends from a bottom of the block portion (C1). The block portion (C1) has a receptacle (C3) which is outside the housing (A, B) with a first opening defined in top of the block portion (C1) and a second opening defined in a side of the block portion (C1) and in communication with the first opening. The first opening of the receptacle (C3) is presented for receiving the free section (I2) of the shackle when the free section is placed in the locked position. The block portion (C1) together with the stem portion (C2) is rotatable with respect to the housing (A, B) between a first position where the second opening of the receptacle (C3) faces the wall (AB4) of the housing (A, B), as depicted in FIG. 7, and a second position where the second opening of the receptacle (C3) is turned away from the wall (AB4), as depicted in FIG. 8.

The numeral wheel set is disposed in the housing (A, B) and includes a shaft (E), a plurality of inner sleeves (Fa, Fb) and a plurality of digit-wheels (G). The shaft (E) of the numeral wheel set is parallel with the stem portion (C2) of the confining block (C) and lies diagonally opposite to the block portion (C1) of the confining block (C). The inner sleeves (Fa, Fb) are in parallel with one another and are placed around the shaft (E). Each of the digit-wheels (G) is mounted around a respective one of the inner sleeves (Fa, Fb).

As described above, the '331 Provisional Application fully supports all of the features of Claims 38-39, and it is respectfully submitted that only references filed prior to the '331 Provisional Application can be cited to form a prima facie case of novelty or obviousness of any of claims 38-39.

Rejection of claim 38 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

Claim 38 presently stands rejected as being anticipated by Taylor et al (U.S. 2002/0088256). This rejection is respectfully traversed for at least the following reasons.

Applicant respectfully submits that Taylor does not disclose or suggest each and every element set forth in claim 38, and therefore Taylor neither anticipates, nor forms a prima facie case of obviousness of, claim 38.

Taylor fails to disclose or suggest at least the features of 1) a housing having *a notch in a corner thereof, a wall facing said notch*; 2) a confining block including a block portion *received in said notch* of said housing; 3) said block portion having *a second opening defined in a side of said block portion*; and 4) said block portion being rotatable with respect to said housing *between a first position where said second opening faces said wall of said housing, and a second position where said second opening is turned away from said wall of said housing*.

For at least these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that claim 38 is allowable over Taylor, and withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Rejection of claims 38 and 40 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 38 and 40 presently stand rejected as being anticipated by Lin (CN 2041340). This rejection is respectfully traversed for at least the following reasons.

As defined in amended claim 38, (and with reference to Figs. 7 and 8 above), the second opening of the receptacle (C3) faces the wall (AB4) of the housing (A, B) when the block portion (C1) of the confining block (C) is in the first position (see FIG. 7) and turns away from the wall (AB4) when the block portion (C1) is rotated to the second position (See FIG. 8). In this way, the second opening of the receptacle (C3) enables the free section (I2) of the shackle (I) to rotate in or out of the receptacle (C3) when the block portion (C1) is in the second position. However, while in the first position, as depicted in FIG. 7, the block portion (C1) blocks the free section (I2) from rotating in or out of the receptacle (C3). At this moment, if the free section (I2) is right received in the receptacle (C3), the free section (I2) can be safely enclosed by the block portion (C1) and the wall (AB4).

In contrast, referring to Liu's FIG. 1, reproduced below (with dash lines added to indicate another position of the shackle for comparison), Liu fails to disclose or suggest a notch at a corner of the housing for reception of the block portion and a wall which faces the notch and blocks a side opening of the block portion when the block portion is in a locked state.

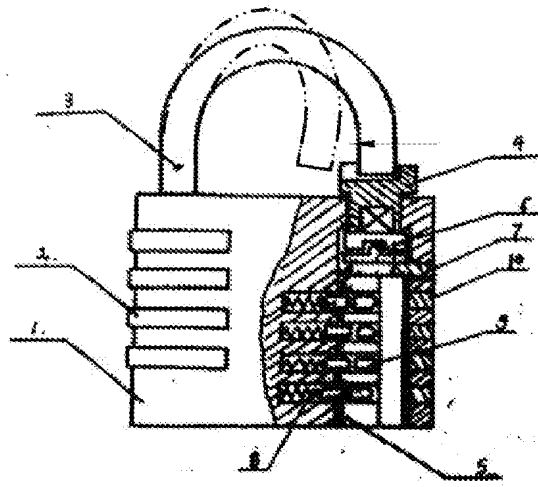


Fig. 1

In fact, Liu discloses a lock body (1), a shackle (3) and an opening-closing pin (4). The pin (4) has interconnected top and side openings. When the shackle (3) has its one end confined in the pin (4), as shown in Fig. 1, the side opening of the pin (4) faces, with no barrier, directly toward the other end of the shackle (3). For this reason, the shackle (3) may easily be tampered by exerting a force in a direction indicated by the arrow (toward the other end of the shackle), and become distorted as shown by the dashed line to permit unauthorized opening of the lock. The security of the lock is therefore reduced. Unlike Liu's lock, the lock of the present application has its free section (I2) safely guarded by the block portion (C1) and the wall (AB4), as shown in FIG. 7 above, and therefore has higher security.

For at least these reasons, Liu fails to disclose or suggest each and every element set forth in claim 38, and therefore Liu neither anticipated, nor forms a prima facie case of obviousness of, claim 38. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claim 38 is allowable over the cited reference, and the rejection of claim 40 is rendered moot by the cancellation of claim 40. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Rejection of claims 39 and 41 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 39 and 41 presently stand rejected as being unpatentable over Lin in view of Lai (U.S. 6035672). This rejection is respectfully traversed for at least the following

reasons.

As discussed above, Lin neither anticipates, nor forms a prima facie case of obviousness of, claim 38 at least because Liu fails to disclose or suggest a notch at a corner of the housing for reception of the block portion and a wall which faces the notch and blocks a side opening of the block portion when the block portion is in a locked state.

It is respectfully submitted that Lai fails to supplement the deficiency of Lin with regard to the features discussed above, so that Lin and Lai together fail to form a prima facie case of obviousness of claim 38. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claim 38 is allowable over the cited references, and claim 39 is allowable at least due to its dependency. Further, the rejection of claim 41 is rendered moot by the cancellation of claim 41. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Conclusion

In view of the amendments to the claims, and in further view of the foregoing remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, it is requested that claims 38 and 39 be allowed and the application be passed to issue.

If any issues remain that may be resolved by a telephone or facsimile communication with the Applicant's attorney, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the numbers shown.

BACON & THOMAS, PLLC
625 Slaters Lane, Fourth Floor
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-1176
Phone: (703) 683-0500

Date: August 3, 2010

Respectfully submitted,



JOHN R. SCHAEFER
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 47,921